

Meeting Summary
Delaware Geographic Data Committee
January 28, 1999
State Personnel Training Center, Paradee Building, Dover

Attendance List: *

Vincent Rucinski -- DelDOT	Randy Westergren -- Kent County
Kent Richter -- DelDOT	Tim Westbrook -- New Castle County
George Yocher -- DHSS	Bob Mercready -- Office of Information Services
David S. Hugg, III -- State Planning Coordination	Richard Sacher -- University of Delaware
Michael B. Mahaffie -- State Planning Coordination	Jian Chen -- University of Delaware
Dorothy Morris -- State Planning Coordination	John Laznik -- University of Delaware
Lyn Anderson -- Department of Labor	William S. Schenck -- Delaware Geological Survey
Bob Schulz -- Department of Labor	David R. Racca -- University of Delaware
Dennis Murphy -- DNREC	Tracy DeLiberty, University of Delaware
Susan Moerschel -- DNREC	Alex Settles -- University of Delaware
Deborah S. Sullivan -- DNREC	Karen Cooper -- Delaware State Housing Authority
Lee Emmons -- DNREC	Brad Ebaugh -- Delaware Electric Cooperative
William B. Brierly -- DNREC	Sally Brady -- USGS
Michael G. Townshend -- Department of State	Kathy Covert -- FGDC
Kevin Coyle -- Kent County	Jeff Bergstrom -- City of New Castle
Rick Rutter -- Kent County	Pamela Goffinet -- DART/City of Wilmington

Welcome and Introductions

Mike Mahaffie led a quick, "round the room," set of introductions, explaining that the group was still new to itself. Each attendee identified who they were and where they were from.

Changes and Updates

Randy Westergren, head of the new Kent County Department of Geography, was introduced. He took a moment to talk about his mission.

Susan Moerschel, of DNREC, announced that she has hired Miriam Lynam, formerly of the Coastal Management Program, to take the GIS position in State Parks that Dave Mannering vacated in the fall. Ms. Lynam will start in early February.

Kathy Covert, of the Federal Geographic Data Committee, announced a national GeoData Forum, to be held in June 7-9 in Washington, DC. The two and one-half day meeting will provide an opportunity to reflect on the past, assess the present and explore future development of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure.

Ms. Covert also previewed a new FGDC grant program that will offer \$1.5 million for the collection of metadata. The announcement of this grant program is now online at www.usgs.gov/contracts/nsdi/index.html. In a sidebar after the meeting, it was agreed that the DGDC and the University would work to get some of this money by applying for funds to support several "metadata guerillas" -- graduate students who can help state agencies and other members complete metadata for their GIS data.

* This list is based on the sign-in sheets filled in at the meeting. If you remember someone who was there whom we missed, please let us know.

Report from the Statewide Mapping Advisory Committee (SMAC)

Sandy Schenck, of the Delaware Geological Survey, gave an overview of the January 20 SMAC meeting, which included data updates from all attendees. Mr. Schenck reported that hopes to have a SMAC web site complete by the end of the first week in February and that he will post meeting minutes on that site.

Mr. Schenck led a brief discussion of the advisability of having SMAC meetings quarterly, rather than annually. It was agreed that, given the amount of change in the GIS world, it would be wise to continue to meet on a quarterly basis.

Mr. Schenck announced that the final version of the Digital Line Graph (DLG) data, prepared in a cooperative effort between USGS and Delaware, is now available. The DLG data set includes detailed GIS renderings of the USGS Quarter Quad sheet maps, but does not include attribute data showing names of features. It also does not include the SR1 relief route. The DLG files are useful, he noted, for making quick maps, but not always for editing maps or for more detailed work. They do fit exactly over the Digital Raster Graphic (DRG) files that have also just become available. These are GeoTIFF's of the USGS map sheets.

Both data sets are available on the University's Research Data Management Service web site (www.rdms.udel.edu/rdms/gis/drgdlg/) and will be available via the SMAC web site and the OIS GIS web site.

Mr. Schenck also spoke about the advisability of forming a "Federal Agencies Council" as a subset of SMAC. This would be made up of federal agencies working in Delaware with an interest in GIS. Mr. Schenck will work with Paul Petrichenko, of NRCS on this issue.

DGDC Committee Structure

Mike Mahaffie made a presentation on the current and planned status and structure of the DGDC. The DGDC is still in its formative stage and the structure may be expected to change.

Mr. Mahaffie explained that the SMAC is intended to be a technical group, in which members can share data and identify issues and data needs. These issues and data needs can then be carried to the DGDC, which is intended to be a more "policy-level" group which looks for ways to facilitate communication and cooperation and to solve problems.

The SMAC group will provide a forum for data updates and will provide technical and cartographic leadership. It was decided that the subcommittee identified at the last DGDC meeting should report through the SMAC. It was also mentioned that there might be additional subcommittees, such as a geocoding and addressing user's group, as suggested by Lynn Anderson, at Labor. Tim Westbrook, of New Castle County, suggested a subcommittee to look into issues around Cadastral mapping, including a unified set of specifications for cadastral mapping and aerial photography.

The DGDC group will be the place in which there is official representation from "Agencies," as defined in HB395. There would be less need for technical knowledge and more need for a policy perspective. This will be the group that speaks for state agencies, counties and municipal governments in making the decisions that will help move GIS along in Delaware.

Mr. Mahaffie will take the lead on an outreach to policy-makers. He will work with individual state agencies to identify the appropriate representation. As a first step, he went around the room to see who was there and whether they were the right "policy person."

Communications Issues

Mike Mahaffie gave an overview of some of the communication techniques used by the DGDC. These include web sites, an e-mail listserv, and a newsletter published by OIS. He stressed the need to inter-link web sites and asked that any members with a web-site that relates to GIS issues should let him know (mmahaffie@state.de.us) the URL. A collection of DGDC links is on-line at www.state.de.us/planning/coord/dgdc/dgdclink.htm.

All known members of the DGDC group have now been added to an e-mail listserv that can be used to broadcast e-mail messages. An explanation of the listserv is on-line at www.state.de.us/planning/coord/dgdc/dgdcinfo.htm. This will be used to send out meeting notices and data update notices. It will also be used to facilitate user questions and answers.

Susan Moerschel asked if the listserv could be used to announce when data sets have been added to the Data Clearinghouse. Dick Sacher agreed to look into the idea. Mike Mahaffie urged those posting new data to use the listserv to announce the fact themselves.

GIS Conference Preparation

Alex Settles announced a University of Delaware Policy Forum scheduled for March 15 at Clayton hall, in Newark. The Forum will be titled Geographic Information Systems: Issues of Implementation. It will include more information on the Data Clearinghouse, information on data documentation, an evaluation of the current uses of GIS in Delaware, and future plans. Vendors will be invited to display their software and there are plans for a poster session. A preliminary agenda is being prepared and will be sent out shortly. The registration fee is expected to be \$45 per person.

General Discussion

Several issues were discussed at the close of the meeting. They included:

- **Cadastral/Orthophotography Issues** -- County representatives repeated their concern for the use appropriate scales in aerial photography for cadastral mapping. It was suggested that the State consider inviting representatives from the state of Maryland, who have faced similar questions, to talk to the group. Various members of the group spoke in support of a regular update schedule for aerial photography.
- **MrSID** -- OIS has purchased a full license to operate MrSID, an image compression technology that greatly reduces the file size of aerial photographs and scanned materials. Mike Mahaffie will work with OIS and with interested agencies to make sure that this technology is available to GIS users.